DC
BATMAN: RETURN
857
NOV
2009
BATWOMAN in
DETECTIVE
COMICS
GREG
RUCKA
J.H.
WILLIAMS III
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SECOND FEATURE
The QUESTION

GREG RUCKA
WRITER
It's really dreadful, the way all the creatures argue.
It's enough to drive one crazy.
ALICE.
IF YOU'VE HURT MY FATHER--
You should learn not to make personal remarks...
...it's rude--
KATE--
ARTIST
J H WILLIAMS III

--GO RED, MOP FOR CW--
--:HNHFFF:-
BE QUIET!!
Never mind!
HE'S SERVED HIS PURPOSE, HIGH MADAME!
ALLOWING HIM TO LIVE IS--
--A MISTAKE...
COLONEL! DAD!
DADDY!
SHE HAS HIM. ALICE HAS MY FATHER.
THERE'S TWO REASONS FOR ALICE TO NICK YOUR OLD MAN, MISS KANE. FIRST, BECAUSE HE'S YOUR OLD MAN...
...AND SECOND, BECAUSE HE'S A FULL-BIRD IN THE ARMY, WITH ALL THE ACCESS THAT GRANTS HIM.
"MOP FOR CW."
Of course it would be all the better.
But it wouldn't be all the better his being punished.
WHY? WHY IS HE ALLOWED TO LIVE?!
It's exactly like a riddle with no answer.
And now for the last brook, and to be Queen!
GOD HELP ME, ABBOT, I KNOW WHAT ALICE IS PLANNING.
WE NEED TO GO TO MY PLACE FIRST, THEN THE BASE.
KATE? EVERYTHING COOL?
NO.

DAVE STEWART
colors

TODD KLEIN
letters

HARVEY RICHARDS
asst. ed.

MICHAEL SIGLAIN
editor

J.H. WILLIAMS III
cover

Batman created by Bob Kane

--MOP FOR CW, MOPP IS THE ARMY ACRONYM FOR MISSION-ORIENTED PROTECTIVE POSTURE.
GAS MASKS AND HAZMAT SUITS.
THERE'S A STOCKPILE OF OLD CHEM AND BIO-WEAPONS ON BASE, ALL MARKED FOR DISPOSAL.
IF ALICE IS LOOKING TO MURDER EVERYONE IN GOTHAM, THAT'D BE THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO DO IT.
THE BEST VECTOR FOR A CW ATTACK WOULD BE FROM THE AIR.
I CAN'T FLY.
I CAN.
CLAIRE?
YOU AND HAYES GET A PLANE, MEET US AT THE AIRFIELD AT FORT RICHARDS...
ELEGY PART 4 ~ RIBBON
...YOU SEE THE HIGH MADAME, DO NOT ENGAGE! THE TWICE-NAMED THINKS WE'RE DEALING WITH CHEMICAL WEAPONS.
WE'RE EN ROUTE.
GET ON AND HOLD TIGHT.

STOP THE VEHICLE, PLEASE.
FORT RICHARDS - SIGLAIN FIELD
Authorized Personnel Only
Trespassers Will Be Shot
THIS IS A RESTRICTED AREA--
--COLONEL KANE? SIR--
--EVERYONE OUT OF THE VEHICLE! HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM!
Where's the servant whose business it is to answer the door?
OUT! OUT OF--
KRAK
THE PLANE'S IN THE HANGAR, JUST AS YOU ORDERED, HIGH MADAME.
Indeed. I did.

IN THE BEGINNING, THE RAGE AND THE RED ROCK.
PRAISE TO HIM WHO UNMAKES ALL THINGS...
...AND TO HIS HIGH MADAME, WHO USES US FOR HIS PLEASURE.
What have you got to say for yourself?
WE WERE WAITING FOR THE CANISTERS, YOUR HOLINESS. SHALL WE BEGIN LOADING?
Yes, please do.
INSIDE, OLD MAN.
I'LL START THE PREFLIGHT.
Well, that was quick work, certainly!
WAIT, WHAT'RE YOU--
Would you be good enough to stop a minute...
...just to get one's breath again?
KRA!

THAT'S THEM!
LOOK AT THE WINGS--
HOW CAN YOU TELL?
--THEY'RE RIGGED TO DELIVER A CHEMICAL PAYLOAD!
THAT'S THE COLONEL'S CAR. THEY TOOK HIM WITH THEM.
WE'VE GOT TO BRING THAT PLANE DOWN.
AND WE BETTER DO IT DAMN FAST.
TAKE A LOOK...
...CYANOGEN CHLORIDE. IT'S A BLOOD AGENT...
...WORKS THROUGH INHALATION AS WELL AS SKIN ABSORPTION, IT'S NOT PICKY.
ONCE IN THE BODY IT GETS BROKEN DOWN, TURNS INTO CYANIDE.
NON-FLAMMABLE. BLOW IT UP, IT JUST TURNS TO A VAPOR THAT'S HEAVIER THAN AIR...
...IT'LL SETTLE OVER EIGHTY, NINETY PERCENT OF GOTHAM.
TOO RIGHT...
...LOOKS LIKE OUR RIDE'S HERE.
THEN WE BETTER BRING THAT PLANE DOWN VERY CAREFULLY.
ANOTHER C-23. YOU GUYS STEAL IT?
I PREFER MIDNIGHT REQUISI-TION...
...FIGURE WE'VE GOT MAYBE EIGHT MINUTES LEFT BEFORE YOUR LOT TRIES TO SHOOT BOTH PLANES DOWN.

Now, don't smile, my dear, I'm asking it seriously.
What have you got to say for your--
:HNFF:
NHN!
--oh you wicked little thing!
YOU'LL KILL MILLIONS OF PEOPLE!
I'm determined to do it!
It's enough to drive one crazy.
MY GOD..
..BETH...?
There's no such thing.
SOMETHING JUST HAPPENED, THEY BROKE COURSE AND BLED ALTITUDE FOR A FEW SECONDS, THERE.
GIVE ME ANOTHER MINUTE AND WE'LL BE ON TOP OF THEM.
GOOD LASS, CLAIRE.
WE NEED TO COME IN ABOVE THEM.
AND THEN WHAT?
AND THEN I FORCE THAT THING DOWN.
THAT PLANE CRASHES OR EXPLODES, MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. THE CYANOGEN WILL BLANKET GOTHAM ALL THE SAME.
SO YOU'VE MADE CLEAR, MISTER ABBOT.
WAIT! YOU SAID YOU COULDN'T FLY!
I CAN'T.
MY DAD CAN.

HNFFF
SHiNK

YOU!
I WILL GIVE THE HIGH MADAME YOUR STILL-BEATING HEART!
BRING IT.
KRAK
THUK
SNAP!
SPAK
POOMF
SMOK!

YEAH.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
SHKIK
SHKSSS
TINK

Keep back, please!
We don't want you with us!
NGNN
gmhn
COLONEL! YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO LAND THIS PLANE!
AND ROGER!
DAMMIT, DAD...
...I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
KLK
BATMAN RULE IN EFFECT, KATE.
DON'T KILL HER.
I'M ALWAYS ON THE BATMAN RULE, SIR.
SIGLAIN FIELD, SIGLAIN FIELD. THIS IS SHERPA CALL-SIGN OSCAR MIKE SEVEN SEVEN...
...REQUEST A VECTOR AND HAZMAT SERVICES...

YOU'RE DONE, HIGH MADAME.
I DISABLED THE PUMP, YOU'RE NOT KILLING ANYONE TODAY.
I can't stand this any longer!
And as for you!
As for you, I'll shake you into a kitten, that I will!!
BAMBAMBAMBAMBAMkik kik
DAMMIT, STOP!
IT'S OVER, ALICE!
Paff
BAM
AHG!
The face is what one goes by, generally.
Who am I, then?

Tell me that first, and then, if I like being that person, I'll come up...
...if not, then I'll stay down here till I'm somebody else.
BAM BAM BAM
SSKREESHAHK!
GRAB HOLD OF ME!
NO, DON'T--
YOU HAVE OUR FATHER'S EYES.

End of
ELEGY

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# The Question: PIPELINE

CHAPTER ONE
PART FOUR

CAN YOU SEE ME?
IT'S CALLED A VIDEO CHAT, RENEE. OF COURSE I CAN SEE YOU.
HOLLYWOOD
YOU MAY WISH TO PUT ON A SHIRT.
NOTHING YOU HAVEN'T SEEN BEFORE, I'M SURE, PROFESSOR.
THIS IS PASSCODE LOCKED. I CAN'T BREAK IT. CAN YOU HACK IT FOR ME?
I'LL NEED CONTROL OF YOUR COMPUTER.
ALL YOURS.
THIS IS RELATED TO HECTOR SOLIZ'S MISSING SISTER, I TAKE IT?
LOUISA. AND IT USED TO BE.
IT'S GOTTEN BIGGER. THEY'RE TRAFFICKING WOMEN, TOT.
THEY'RE SELLING THEM.
"WE SAY THAT SLAVERY HAS VANISHED FROM CIVILIZATION, BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE...
"...SLAVERY STILL EXISTS, BUT NOW APPLIES TO WOMEN AND ITS NAME IS PROSTITUTION."
ELIZABETH CADY STANTON?
VICTOR HUGO. LES MISERABLES.

ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT I'M LOOKING FOR?
G.H.C. EXPORTS HAS TO BE A SEMI-LEGITIMATE FRONT. BOLT--THIS IS HIS SMARTPHONE--WAS WORKING FOR THE "C" IN THE NAME. A GUY NAMED CHANDLESS.
THERE'S A HOME ADDRESS FOR A GORDON CHANDLESS UP ON MULHOLLAND.
I'M PUTTING IT ON YOUR SCREEN NOW.
TIME FOR MR. CHANDLESS TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS.
DO ME A FAVOR. KEEP DIGGING ON G.H.C. IF THEY'RE A FRONT, I WANT TO KNOW WHO'S BEHIND THEM.
I'LL GET TO WORK ON IT.
AND RENEE? GO CAREFULLY.
PEOPLE WHO SELL LIVES VALUE THEM ONLY AS A COMMODITY.
A VERY CHEAP ONE.

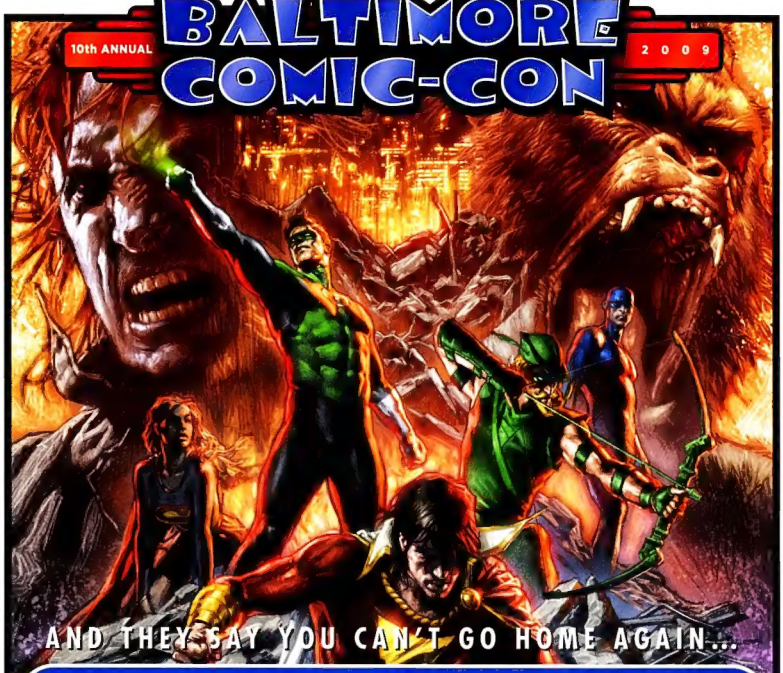
HOLLYWOOD HILLS
CAM 8
Indigo Star - MANIFEST

YOU'RE PERSISTENT, BUT YOU'RE NOT VERY BRIGHT.
YOU THINK YOU COULD JUST WALK IN HERE?
YOU THINK WE DIDN'T SPOT YOU ON THE CAMERAS THE MOMENT YOU CAME OVER THE FENCE?
SURE.
I JUST DIDN'T CARE.
MAYBE YOU'LL CARE ABOUT THIS, THEN
YOU'RE GONNA DIE, THE ONLY QUESTION IS HOW PAINFULLY.
YOU TELL ME WHO YOU ARE AND WHO YOU'RE WORKING FOR, IT'LL BE QUICK.
HEH.
YOU THINK THIS IS FUNNY?
NO, I WAS JUST THINKING THAT IF I'M NOT VERY BRIGHT--
--NEITHER ARE YOU.

HOW ABOUT YOU AND ME TAKE A LITTLE WALK, MR. CHANDLESS?
TELL YOUR MONKEYS THERE TO DROP THEIR GUNS.
...NO, SIR, I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE WATCHING...
...UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES, YES, SIR, I UNDERSTAND...
...YOU HEARD HER.
DROP THE GUNS.
...WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? I SAID--
CONFIRMED
BLAM
BLAM
SON OF A--!

SHOOT HER!
PARDON ME, BOYS--
BEHIND YOU!
--GOTTA FLY!

SHE'S GOING FOR THE GATE!
PERIMETER TEAM--
--SHE'S HEADED YOUR WAY!
BLAM
BLAM
PUT HER DOWN!
SHE DOESN'T GET OUT OF HERE ALIVE!
TO BE CONTINUED!




After a month off the road to clean up our offices and draft our fantasy football teams, we've got to get the DC Nation Tour back out on the road this October. We're headed to the Baltimore Comic-Con on October 10th &11th at the Baltimore Convention Center, and this is a special stop for a few reasons. First of all, **Marc Nathan** has created a show that is a great experience for everybody who attends. If you're a fan and you want to meet an incredible number of comics pros in a friendly environment – Baltimore is the convention for you. Marc has packed so much into two days between signings, panels, the dealers' room, and the Harvey Awards that you'll find more than enough to keep you overstimulated.

Another reason this show is special for us is that I've been to every single Baltimore Comic-Con and have been friends with Marc for longer than I'm sure either of us would care to admit. You get to meet a ton of really, really great people when you work in comics, and Marc is certainly one of the best. His passion for this convention and for showing the attendees a great time is amazing. Hailing from Washington, D.C. I consider Baltimore Comic-Con my hometown show, and being there to do our DC Nation and Sunday Conversation panels at the 10th anniversary show is extra cool for me.

So please come out and see us at the Baltimore Comic-Con if you're anywhere in the area. The guest list this year is astoundingly great – and topped off by Guest of Honor **George Pérez!** And if you're not already wanting to go, keep in mind that you'll get to see me and **James Robinson** debate the merits of **Charles Bukowski** at the DC Nation panel. And then we're gonna arm-wrestle. Don't miss it!

- **Ian Sattler**, Senior Story Editor DCU

# DC NATION

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I am legion